

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-12. (*Canceled*)

Claim 13. (*Currently amended*) A method for treating food to clean and reduce the level of microorganisms on the surface of said food, said method comprising treatment occurring just prior to consumption, comprising the step of contacting the surface of said food with a aqueous dilute treatment composition comprising a toxicologically-acceptable anionic ~~and/or nonionic~~ detergent surfactant; total electrolyte to provide at least about 0.04 molarity of cations, and toxicologically-acceptable basic buffer to provide a pH of greater than about 8.5, the composition being essentially free of any material that adversely affects safety or palatability, so that said food does not need to be rinsed before consumption, said composition comprising:

- (a) greater than about 0.015% by weight of a member selected from the group consisting of sodium or potassium lauryl sulfate, ~~potassium C₈₋₁₄ soaps~~, and mixtures thereof;
- (b) toxicologically-acceptable basic buffer selected from the group consisting of water soluble borates, hydroxides, ortho-phosphates, carbonates, and/or bicarbonates, to provide a pH of from about 8.5 to about 13
- (c) sufficient electrolyte to provide at least about 0.04 molarity of cations without considering any surfactant cations;
- (d) optionally, from about 0.0005% to about 3% by weight of calcium ion sequestrant selected from the group consisting of water soluble salts of polyphosphates, organic polycarboxylic acid, and mixtures thereof;
- (e) optionally, toxicologically-acceptable preservative;
- (f) optionally, toxicologically acceptable suds suppresser;
- (g) the balance comprising an aqueous carrier optionally containing ~~from 3.5% to 10%, by weight, of ethanol.~~

Claim 14. (*Canceled*)

15. (*Previously presented*) The method of Claim 13 wherein said aqueous treatment composition comprises:

- (a) less than about 5% by weight and sufficient to maintain the viscosity of said solution to less than about 50 centipoise, of sodium or potassium lauryl sulfate;

- (b) toxicologically-acceptable basic buffer selected from the group consisting of water soluble potassium and/or sodium, hydroxides, ortho-phosphates, and/or carbonates, to provide a pH of from about 10.0 to about 12.5;
- (c) sufficient electrolyte to provide at least about 0.08 molarity of cations and
- (d) from about 0.001% to about 2% by weight of said calcium ion sequestrant, which is selected from the group consisting of sodium and/or potassium tripolyphosphate, ethylenediaminetetraacetate, citrate, and mixtures thereof.

Claims 16-30 (*Canceled*)